

REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance of the claims of the present application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

In this Preliminary Amendment, applicants have canceled original Claims 1-11 and 31 since those claims are the subject matter of co-pending application U.S. Serial No. 09/676,882, filed September 29, 2000. Applicants have also amended Claims 12-14, 16, 19, 20, 24-28, 30 and 32-34. Additionally, applicants have amended the specification to include reference to the parent application.

Claims 12-14, 16, 19, 24-28, 30 and 32-34 have been amended to positively and clearly recite that the aluminum oxide is “ γ -aluminum oxide having substantially no re-growth of interfacial oxide, wherein no hydroxyl absorption is observed in said γ -aluminum oxide by FTIR.” Support for the amendments to Claims 12-14, 16, 19, 24-28, 30 and 32-34 is found throughout the specification, i.e, Page 14, line 5 - Page 16, line 5, Page 21, lines 16-27, FIG. 4 and FIG. 7. More specifically, referring to Page 14 line 31 to Page 15, line 4, applicants disclose that the Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) spectrum, depicted in FIG. 4, indicates that γ -alumina oxide films deposited at greater than 500°C do not display absorption bands at 3700-3000 cm^{-1} that are attributed to OH and H_2O . Therefore, applicants disclose that “no hydroxyl absorption is observed in the γ -aluminum oxide by FTIR”, as recited in the amended Claims 12-14, 16, 19, 24-28, 30 and 32-34.

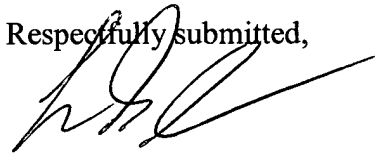
Now referring to the passage beginning at Page 15, line 30, and concluding on Page 16, line 5, of the specification, applicants disclose that γ -alumina oxide films deposited at temperatures lower than 500°C contain significant quantities of OH and/or absorbed

water, therefore “more readily allowing the diffusion of oxygen through the film facilitating the formation of an interfacial oxide layer during post annealing.” The γ -alumina oxide films deposited using the applicants’ method have substantially no re-growth of interfacial oxide, since the applicants’ γ -alumina oxide film does not contain significant quantities of OH and/ or absorbed water. Referring to Page 21, line 24, applicants disclose that the interfacial oxide layer in the applicants’ γ -alumina oxide film maybe reduced to a few angstroms. Therefore, the applicants’ specification discloses “ γ -aluminum oxide having substantially no re-growth of interfacial oxide”, as recited in the amended Claims 12-14, 16, 19, 24-28, 30 and 32-34.

Since the above amendments to the claims and specification do not introduce new matter into the application, entry thereof is respectfully requested.

Consideration and allowance of the claims of the present application are thus respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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